



Fridley

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

JUNE 2015
NO. 194

We believe in a Fridley that is a safe, vibrant, friendly and stable home for families and businesses.

6431 University Avenue NE
Fridley, MN 55432
phone: 763-571-3450
www.FridleyMN.gov
e-mail: info@FridleyMN.gov

Mayor – Scott J. Lund
Councilmember-at-Large – Robert L. Barnette
Councilmember 1st Ward – James T. Saefke
Councilmember 2nd Ward – Dolores M. Varichak
Councilmember 3rd Ward – Ann R. Bolkcom
City Manager – Wally Wysopal

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Arrive Alive

“9-1-1, what is your emergency?”

“We were in an accident. My friend’s not breathing. I can see blood on the windshield...”

These scenes depict our worst nightmare. There is no happy ending, no redo, no turning back time. This is the consequence of distracted driving or driving while intoxicated.

It is a powerful message, and one Fridley high school students experienced firsthand during an intensive two-day event.

The Scenario: Partying before prom, drinks flowing, two groups of kids leave in separate vehicles, five per car. The first driver is sober. He gets distracted by his boisterous friends, runs a stop sign and slams on his brakes. The driver in vehicle two is drunk, fails to stop and rear ends the first vehicle. His front passenger is not wearing a seatbelt and goes through the windshield. Others are critically hurt.

A loud firecracker noise grabs everyone’s attention, the sound of the crash, simulated by a flash bang deployed by the Anoka County Swat Team. A cloth is pulled off two vehicles and the simulation begins.

“Two critical at scene.”

Student actors from the High School portray the victims of the crash, complete with blood, gore, tears and blame. The police are first on the scene, firetrucks and ambulances close behind. Through the coordinated response by police, fire, Allina and Life Link III, these high school students were given the ability to see just how chaotic an incident like this can be. Radio traffic from Central Communications was broadcast throughout the course of events as help arrived on the scene.



One girl is critically injured, trapped in the vehicle. Firefighters extricate her from the car and she is immediately air-lifted by helicopter. Two others, also critical, depart by ambulance. The drunk driver is put through field sobriety tests and arrested. As for the passenger who went through the windshield, he is declared dead at the scene and is driven away in a body bag.

That concludes Day One.



Students assemble on Day Two in the auditorium to decompress. They are shown a video of the aftermath: courtroom activities, the death notification, and the suspect getting booked into jail. They listen to the actor who played the part of the student that “died.” His mother and his younger brother talk about the possibility of life without him, and for the actor, the power of his experience. Students also hear from Karen Evans of Wright County Court Services who struck and killed a person after distracted driving in 1996. Day Two concludes with words from Anoka County Attorney Tony Palumbo.

The images alone are enough to make you pause and think; the words even more powerful. If this incredible two-day event makes a difference for even one teen driver, we call it a success. Let this be a reminder to all of us to make smart decisions, put the phone down and do not drink and drive.

NIGHT to UNITE!
Neighbors Joining Together

Tuesday, August 4, 2015
Join us as we celebrate our
Police and Community Partnership.

If you are interested in hosting a neighborhood block party, please contact Fridley Police Special Projects Coordinator Myra Harris Johnson at 763-572-3638 or Myra.Harris@FridleyMN.gov



The Past and Future of Columbia Arena

The glory days of Columbia Arena are long past, even as the fond memories remain. Best known as home of D3: The Mighty Ducks, filmed almost entirely at the Columbia Arena in the mid-90s, the arena served local youth for over 20 years.

In 2006, the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission faced \$2 million in repairs and upgrades in order to continue operating the arena. They decided to invest in a new sheet of ice at the Blaine Sports Center instead, sold the Columbia Arena to a developer, and it has been vacant ever since.

Vacant is not the right word. It is a dilapidated shell of what it once was; ruined by years of squatters, vandalism and graffiti artists. From the outside, it is an eyesore, especially in such a prominent location. From the inside, it is much worse, and completely beyond rehabilitation. The structural elements are dangerous; the plumbing has been destroyed including all porcelain fixtures; every inch of copper wiring, electrical elements and HVAC have been stripped; and every part of the interior has been vandalized beyond description. The costs and liabilities make restoration no longer an option. It is much safer and financially sound to start anew.

So what to do? We went to you for help. A series of four public brainstorming sessions were held in



Vintage Columbia Arena: early 1970s

March and April to hear your thoughts on what should become of the Columbia Arena site. Almost 100 residents answered our invite and participated in these work sessions. Together with City staff, those residents developed a 7-page recommendation that will now proceed to the Planning Commission, Fridley HRA and eventually the City Council.

What did we learn?

- 1. Everyone loves parks. The park will remain.
- 2. There is a great interest in community/civic areas, but not in a large tax burden.
- 3. There is a community need for several housing styles including affordable single family housing and options for senior housing.

The final recommendation: The 7-page proposal outlines a mixed use of the 22 acres. Partnering with private developers who understand the community goals will help provide tax dollars to fund some kind of civic and community area to better service the needs of Fridley residents and businesses.

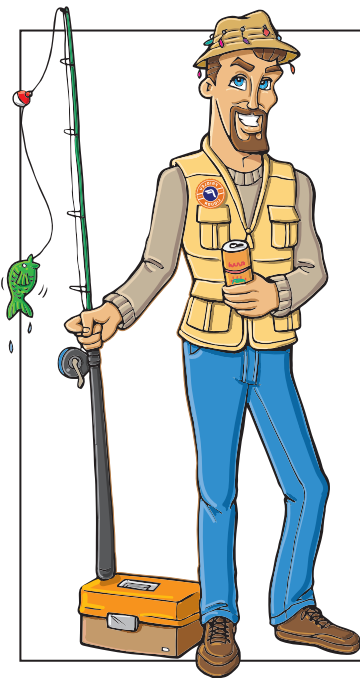
As we take more steps in planning for the Columbia Arena site, we will keep you in-the-know, and invite you to share your thoughts at future public hearings before the City Council. Dates will be publicized in the *Fridley Focus*, through social media, and on our website at www.FridleyMN.gov.



Columbia Arena today



Catch our new cable program, **Community Connection!** This monthly video news update takes a closer look at some of the activities around the community. View it on Comcast Channel 17, or online at www.FridleyMN.gov.



Headed to the Lake?

Catch a great deal at Fridley Liquor and stock up on all your favorites.

And to "reel you in" save up to 50% with our monthly email specials. Sign up online at www.FridleyLiquor.com to get in on these exclusive deals!



Fridley Presented with Awards for Water Management

Congratulations to the efforts of the Fridley Water Division and Environmental Planning for receiving two outstanding awards for water management: the Minnesota Blue Star Award and Outstanding Anoka County Conservationist.

What is a Blue Star City? It is the evaluation and recognition of efforts to keep our water resources clean and safe, prevent storm water pollution, and help our community learn more through environmental education. Fridley not only achieved this award, but placed 8th in the state!

The award was created in partnership with Friends of the Mississippi River, Minnesota GreenStep Cities, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Emmons and Olivier Resources Inc, and several watershed districts and private foundations. Alicia Uzarek, Friends of the Mississippi River Program Coordinator, presented the award on April 13. “This award is a reflection of the work done throughout the community,” said Uzarek. “I would like to thank you and your watershed partners for

establishing community priorities to stop runoff before it starts, protect natural resources with smart planning, and for reaching out to the community to share responsibility for clean water.”

In addition, the Anoka County Conservation District selected the City of Fridley as the 2014 Anoka County Outstanding Conservationist.

Mayor Lund stated, “What a positive note for the people of Fridley to be given the knowledge that we have a great staff, and we’re being recognized by organizations because of our efforts to improve water quality and storm water runoff.”

These efforts were successful thanks to the support of our City Council and our water partners: Coon Creek Watershed District, Rice Creek Watershed District, Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and the Anoka County Conservation District.



Kay Qualley (Environmental Planner), Alicia Uzarek (Friends of the Mississippi River), Mayor Lund and Jim Kosluchar (Public Works Director)

City Hall Update: Meeting the Needs of a Growing City

Fridley City Hall and Fridley Public Works buildings are over 60 years old. Unfortunately, we are starting to see the effects of age and space needs on both buildings. Concerned about the high cost of remodeling but recognizing a serious need for updates, we conducted a study last summer to address things like leaking roofs, deteriorating walls, poor air quality, worn-out equipment, a failing parking ramp and a lack of space for operations.

Municipal Center Results:

- Decent exterior appearance disguises serious problems.
- Significant deficiencies to the roofs, HVAC and electrical systems, windows and facade.
- Inadequate size for police and fire operations.
- Elevators, restrooms, stairwells and entrances are not up to code for handicapped accessibility.
- Although staff size and population has not grown significantly in the last 30 years when the last remodel was done, fire trucks are getting bigger, and new laws/rules pertaining to police operations are changing and requiring additional space.

Public Works Garage Results:

- Poor appearance and poor conditions.
- The mechanics’ area is unsafe for big truck repairs.
- Trucks and equipment have to be left outside due to lack of inside storage.
- Materials are stored outside and could erode into the creek.

As we study options and costs to address these concerns, we have specific goals.

- Meet community needs for the next 50 years.
- Consider traffic and access for police and fire in terms of emergency response.
- Examine costs and the ability to pay them.
- Study opportunities for offsetting costs with private development.
- Improve civic pride and community activities.

In the coming months, we will look for answers and report findings back to the City Council in late July. Public meetings will be held in September to review any proposals. We will be sure to keep you up-to-date as things progress.

Fridley 2014 Water Quality Report

You can now view our annual Water Quality Report online at www.FridleyMN.gov/water-quality.

Once again, we are proud to report that your drinking water meets all state and federal standards. Your drinking water continues to be safe, and we continue our commitment to keeping you informed. The 2014 Water Quality Report includes details on the results of water quality testing last year and news relating to Fridley’s water system.

Our goal is always to go above and beyond current state and federal standards to ensure safe drinking water for our customers. When a new concern surfaced regarding a possible contaminant called 1,4-dioxane, we took action steps. Our latest tests show even the remote traces of this substance are now eliminated from Fridley’s water supply.

For the latest water quality information, please visit us online at www.FridleyMN.gov/water. We are also happy to answer any questions or concerns, call us at (763) 572-3566.

Summer at Springbrook Nature Center • Don’t miss these fun events!



June 20:
Dragon Fly 101
1-4 p.m.
No charge but pre-registration required.



July 11:
Butterfly Survey
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. or 1-3 p.m.
No charge but pre-registration required.



July 25:
Saturday in the Park
Come enjoy free ice cream, a summer hike, music and more in this fun event sponsored by the SNC Foundation.



July 1, 2 and/or 3:
Gramps Camps
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
There is still time to spoil your grandkids with our popular Gramps Camps. These adult/child camps include breakfast. Different adventures each day!
Resident: \$30/person.
Non-resident: \$35/person

Sign-up still available for our weekly nature/science camps, too!
Learn more online at www.FridleyMN.gov or call us at (763) 572-3588.

The Real Estate Rollercoaster

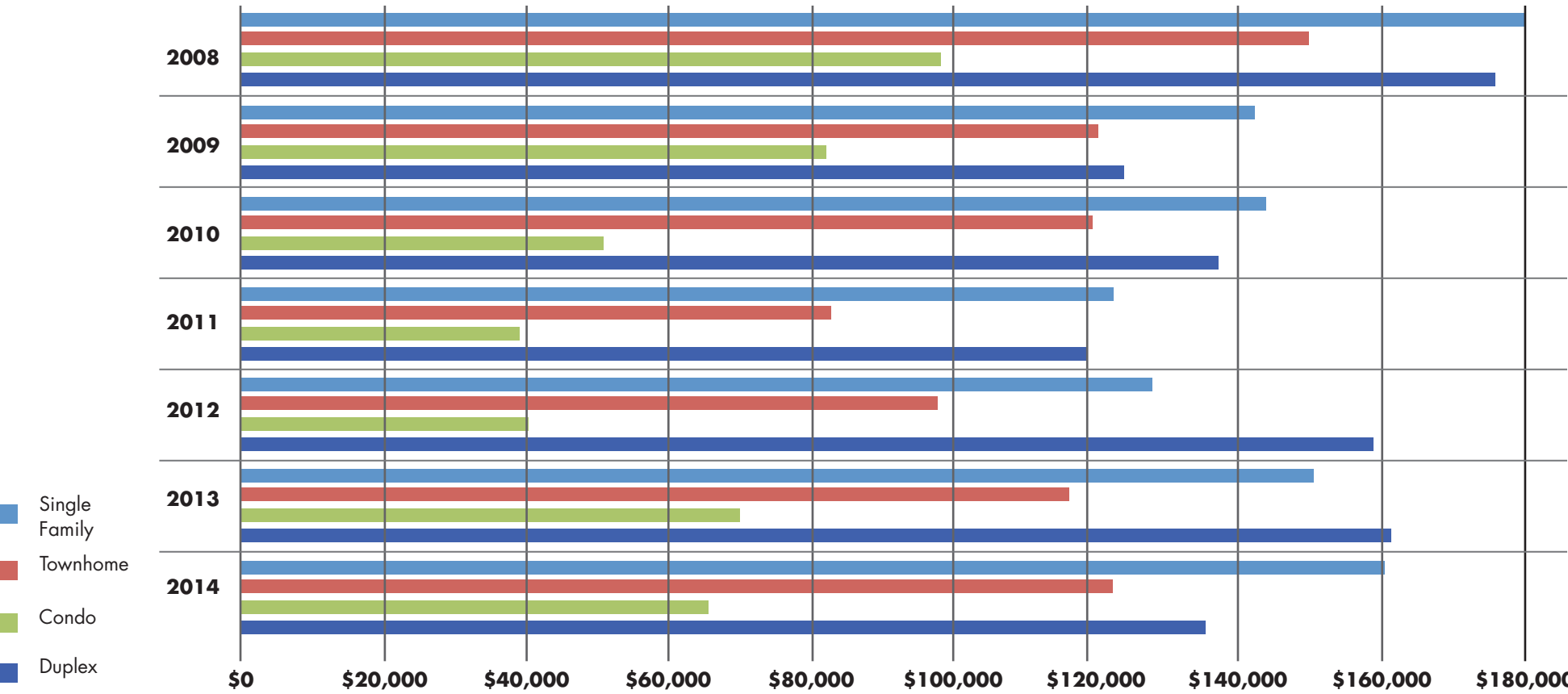
Whether we wanted to or not, we all jumped on the real estate market rollercoaster following the banking crisis of 2008. It was a wild ride with steep drops, small bumps and a long climb back to the top. In 2009, it was a brutal year. The price of single family homes dropped an average of over 18%. In Fridley, we bottomed out two years later with an average sales price of \$124,700; almost \$55,000 less than in 2008. Other housing styles fared even worse. Condominiums lost 60% of their value, as the average sales price declined to \$38,500 in 2011, compared to the average sales price of \$97,900 just three years before.

Now, the good news!

Single family home values jumped just over 17% from 2012 to 2013, and a more modest gain

occurred in 2014, with an average sales price of \$161,400. Interest rates remain near historic lows making for strong demand, while the inventory of houses available has diminished both in volume and price. There are fewer homes available this spring compared to last year and more traditional sellers in the market than distressed sellers, meaning lower priced homes are harder to come by. With supply tight and demand increasing, 2015 should be a seller's year across most types of homes.

We have not reached the peak values that we saw 7 years ago, but we are headed in the right direction, and that is good news for everyone. As of March 31, there are 57 active listings in Fridley and 41 pending sales according to NorthstarMLS. So far this year, the average sales price is up nearly 5.5%.



And Speaking of Housing Values...

Appraisal staff will be out and about in the coming months. This year, we will be visiting approximately 1,750 homes in two areas of the City: on the west end, properties between the river, Osborne Road, the railroad tracks and I-694; and jutting out between 73rd Avenue, Mississippi Street, Central Avenue and the railroad tracks (see map). Commercial, industrial and apartment properties in these areas will also be visited.

Look for a blue postcard in the mail, 1-2 weeks prior to us stopping by. This will give you some general information and the option to schedule an appointment ahead of time.

What You Need to Know:

- We conduct inspections Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- If you are home, we will show City of Fridley identification and request either a brief visual inspection of the inside of your home or simply look around the exterior.
- If no one is home, we will leave a tag on the door letting you know that we stopped by for the appraisal. If an interior inspection is needed, the tag will request that you call to schedule an appointment.
- If we get no response, an estimate of what is typical for the neighborhood will be made for the property. If you disagree with the value

assigned on your tax statement next spring, you may file an appeal which will require an interior inspection.

What Are We Looking For:

- We are verifying data (number of bedrooms, bathrooms, etc.), and gathering information on the condition of the property.

Your Rights:

- You will receive a notice of valuation and classification each spring with the appraiser's estimated market value.
- If you disagree with this value, you may appeal with your local assessor.
- If you cannot resolve issues with the assessor, you can appeal to the Local Board of Appeal & Equalization at the City.
- If issues still remain unresolved, you may then move on to the County Board of Appeal & Equalization.

Approximately 20 percent of Fridley residences are reappraised each year. The data collected this year will be used for the January 2, 2016, assessment for taxes payable in 2017. There is always a two-year lag between the time the data on values is

collected and the time they are reflected in property taxes. We hope this information will help you understand your tax statements.

City staff always carries a photo identification card. Be safe and ask to see it.

Questions? Call Mary Smith at (763) 572-3537 or Patrick Maghrak at (763) 572-3536.





The All-New FridleyMN.gov

Introducing the new and improved City of Fridley website! We have a lot of information to share and it is a fast moving world. Our residents needed a website that is easy to navigate and fun to visit with up-to-date information and contacts. It is important to access information easily, across all platforms including smart phones and tablets. Our old website was unable to effectively meet those needs. We are happy to announce that now we can.

We took on a complete website redesign, with you in mind. Our goals were simple:

- Improve language, menu items and categories so they make sense to residents and business owners
- Ensure responsive design so you can find what you need on any device—from desktops to laptops to mobile devices.

- Provide you an avenue to report concerns, register for activities, pay utilities and connect with us online, as well as give you the chance to subscribe to updates that are important to you.
- Make it easier and less time-consuming for staff to provide community updates and give them increased access to technical support.

In the near future, you will also be able to report a concern and follow its progress as staff responds; apply for permits, licenses and jobs online; and see costs and availability for facility rentals.

We hope you will join in our excitement as we launch this newly-designed site! Visit us at www.FridleyMN.gov!

Summer Property Inspections

Each summer, we conduct visual inspections of Fridley properties, looking for code violations. We do this for several reasons. First, when our community looks nice, it helps increase home values, attracts new families and businesses, and keeps our City vibrant and stable. Second, it eliminates the blame-game. We treat each residence equally. This lessens the animosity that can sometimes be caused by complaint-only code enforcement.

We look at this as an opportunity for education, not accusation. If you are not familiar with City codes, this is our chance to help you learn more. Inspections will take place throughout the entire City for all residential properties, including apartments.

There are a few problems we see every year. Here are some common violations to avoid:

- storage of materials and equipment outside a building
- improper storage of garbage or recycling carts
- parking unlicensed or inoperable cars outside a garage
- piling brush in the yard
- not keeping the height of your grass under 10"
- lack of property maintenance (falling fencing, collapsing retaining walls, unkempt gardens, etc.)

If you would like more information on any of these items or other City codes, the City website is a great resource: www.FridleyMN.gov. You will find details and informational videos on all the common mistakes. Please help us out by addressing any yard cleanup needs before the inspector arrives.



**Missed the
spring recycling
event?
Good news –
we have another
coming up!**



Saturday, July 25 • 9 am – 1 pm
Fridley Public Works

400 71st Ave NE, Fridley
Watch for postcards coming soon!
Recycle electronics, appliances,
mattresses, scrap metal and more.

Most items free!

Check the City website for details,
www.FridleyMN.gov, or give us a call
at (763) 572-3594.

Fridley Community Calendar

June

- 1 Parks & Recreation Commission
- 3 Appeals Commission
- 4 HRA Meeting
- 8 City Council Meeting
- 9 Environmental Quality & Energy Commission
- 17 Planning Commission
- 22 City Council Meeting
- 25-27 Fridley '49er Days

July

- 1 Appeals Commission
- 2 HRA Meeting
- 3 City Offices Closed in Observance of Independence Day
- 13 City Council Meeting
- 14 Environmental Quality & Energy Commission
- 15 Planning Commission
- 25 Recycling Drop-off Event
- 27 City Council Meeting

NOTE: City Council and Commission meetings start at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Municipal Center, 6431 University Avenue NE. The public is welcome.

Hearing impaired persons who need an interpreter or other persons with disabilities who require auxiliary aids and would like to attend a meeting, should contact Roberta Collins at 763-572-3500 at least one week in advance.

State-of-the-Art Transitional Care Joins the Unity Campus

At first glance, walking through the doors of Interlude, you would not know you are in a medical facility. The warm and inviting lobby with a bistro has more of an upscale hotel feel. This unique transitional care facility is now open on the Unity Hospital campus.

The unique elements of this building start with the exterior design. One side of the building, facing the hospital campus, houses a curved, commercial entrance. The other side, facing the neighborhood of Lyric Lane, takes on a residential style. Separate but cohesive – an approach that carries through to their core focus of health and wellness.

Interlude is a transitional care facility, designed for patients who need extended rehab or physical therapy outside a traditional hospital setting but are



looking for an alternative to a nursing home. This hospitality-type atmosphere has a home-away-from-home feel, yet its close proximity to Unity keeps essential clinical connections close. They are even connected by skyway.

This 50-bed facility includes a bistro and café, hair salon, remote pharmacy dispenser, rooms with smart TVs, conference rooms, a therapy pool and state-of-the-art rehabilitation equipment including an underwater treadmill and a non-weight-bearing machine called the Alter G.

The Grand Opening took place on May 21, with a public open house and ribbon cutting event. Find more information about Interlude online at www.interluderestorativesuites.org.



Comcast/Time Warner Merger Falls Apart

In our last edition, we mentioned the possibility of a Comcast merger and how it would affect you. That potential merger is now dead. After the Justice Department expressed concerns over the deal, Comcast announced in late April that they were ending the merger agreement.

Comcast will remain the cable provider for Fridley residents. There will be no change at this time in billing contacts or email addresses. Comcast will also continue to hold the City's franchise agreement.

Wet & Wild Water Party



1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, July 8
Commons Park
6249 7th Street NE

Grades K-5
Event Only: \$6
Event and Extended Hours: \$21

Pre-registration is required
Fridley Parks & Recreation Department
763-572-3570 • www.FridleyMN.gov

FARMERS' MARKET
COMES TO FRIDLEY!

Now Open: Saturdays through October 31 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Fridley Community Center, 6085 7th Street, Fridley, MN

Organized by Minnesota Grown



Fresh From Your Neighbor

Don't Let Your Summer Fun Burn Out!

Fire Safety Tips

Recreational Fires

- No burning between midnight and 9:00 a.m.
- Use only clean wood or charcoal. No burning of trash, leaves or brush.
- Do not use paraffin candles or alcohol as starter fluid.
- Do not let your fire exceed 3 feet in diameter or let the flames reach more than 2 feet high. Also, keep a distance of 5 feet between the base of the fire and all combustible material.
- Fire must be at least 25 feet away from any structure, and in a contained area such as a firepit.
- No recreational fires on windy days when smoke may create a nuisance, during a “burning ban” from the city or MN Department of Natural Resources or if the MN Pollution Control Agency declares an air quality alert.



- A competent adult must supervise the fire at all times and ensure that it is completely extinguished.
- Have a water supply or fire extinguisher nearby.
- The Fire Department has final authority. If we feel the fire is unsafe or causing a problem for others, we will ask you to extinguish it.

Fireworks Safety

- Do not assume legal fireworks are safe. Be careful and aware. Serious burns and injuries have been caused by sparklers and poppers.
- Any firework that flies or is aerial or explosive is illegal in Minnesota. This includes firecrackers, bottle rockets and Roman candles. For a complete list, please visit the City website.

- You must be at least 18 years old to purchase fireworks. A competent, unimpaired adult should supervise children near fireworks.
- Children should not use a match, lighter or punk. The adult supervisor should do all igniting.
- Do not discharge fireworks near buildings or combustible materials.
- Have a water supply or fire extinguisher close by.
- Do not try to relight duds. Soak them in water or wait until you are reasonably certain it is extinguished.
- Consumer fireworks may not be used on public property, including parks, streets and alleys.

Grilling Safety

- BBQ grills should only be used outdoors and away from the home, deck railings, branches and eaves.
- Clean your grill regularly. Grease is a major source of flare-ups.
- Check all connectors for leaks by turning on the cylinder valve and spraying the connections with a solution made by mixing equal amounts of liquid dish soap and water. If bubbles appear, those connections need to be tightened or replaced.
- Use long-handled tools to avoid leaning over the grill when flipping over burgers and other meats. Be mindful of sleeves and clothing.
- Keep a fire extinguisher within a couple steps of your grill, and know how to use it! If you are unsure how to use the extinguisher, do not waste time trying to learn—just call 9-1-1.
- When you are finished grilling with charcoal, let the coals completely cool before disposing them in a metal container—never place hot coals in a plastic or other combustible container.
- Do not turn on the gas while your grill lid is closed.
- Do not overload your grill with food—especially fatty meats.
- Charcoal and gas grills are not allowed on decks or patios of multi-family dwellings.

Have a safe and fun summer! For more fire safety information, visit us online at www.FridleyMN.gov.



Welcome Jon Lennander, PE LS New Assistant City Engineer

Jon jumped right into his new role with the City of Fridley as he starts work on the 2015 pavement management project, the Columbia Ice Arena site and numerous stormwater, facilities and roadway projects.

Jon comes to us from the City of Northfield, where he was the Engineering Division Manager. He holds Bachelor and Master Degrees in Science Civil Engineering, and is a Professional Engineer (PE) and Licensed Land Surveyor (LS). Outside of work, he has a serious golf problem and loves to spend as much time as possible at the lake! Welcome to Fridley, Jon!



Welcome Rick Current New Fire Marshal

Rick joined our team in May, and comes to us with a long history of fire safety knowledge. He serves on the Ramsey County Fire Investigation Team, and is an active member in the Fire Marshal's Association and Minnesota State Fire Chief's Association.

For the past 10 years, Rick served the communities of Arden Hills, North Oaks and Shoreview as Deputy Fire Chief and Fire Marshal for the Lake Johanna Fire Department. Not only did he respond to emergency calls as a firefighter, but he also served as an incident commander and supervisor over duty crews, performed fire prevention, fire investigations, and education duties, as well as conducted commercial fire inspections and plan reviews.

Rick will start meeting with local businesses in the coming months. Please join us in welcoming him to the City of Fridley.



NICKEL JAMBOREE

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 5

Commons Park

Grades K-5

Bring your change and your parent and stop by for games, face painting, puppet shows, hayrides, treats and more!
Most activities are 10-50 cents!

Spend the day with us at Commons Park and the Zone with extended hours:
7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. for only \$20!
Fee includes a \$5 card for games and snacks. Bring a bag lunch.
Register for extended hours online at www.FridleyMN.gov or call 763-572-3570.



Fridley's '49er Days Festival

June 25 - 27

Commons Park – 6249 7th Street NE (corner of 61st and 7th)



Thursday, June 25

6:20 p.m. "Run for Fun"
6:30 p.m. '49er Days Parade - Rain or Shine

Friday, June 26

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Senior Activities
3:30 p.m. City Band
3:30 p.m. Inflatable Carnival
3:30 - 11:00 p.m. Lions Club BeerTent
4:00 p.m. BINGO
4:00 p.m. Harrison Street Band
7:00 - 11:00 p.m. Jonah & The Whales

Saturday, June 27

9:00 a.m. Tennis Tournament
11:00 a.m. Fridley Idol
12:00 p.m. Lions Club BeerTent
12:00 p.m. Football Clinic
12:00 - 4:00 p.m. Kids' Day Activities
12:00 - 4:00 p.m. Petting Zoo
12:00 p.m. Inflatable Carnival
1:00 p.m. Wild Honey Band
1:00 p.m. Pie Baking Contest
4:00 - 9:00 p.m. BINGO
4:00 p.m. Union Junction Band
7:00 - 11:00 p.m. Street Dance
(Chris Brooks & the Silver City Boys)



Festival runs until 11:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday.
For up-to-date details visit "Fridley Days"
on Facebook and LIKE us!

